

"Custer's Revenge" should not return

By LESLIE ROSS
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The Dayton *Journal Herald* recently published an article describing a new video game. The game, "Custer's Revenge" shows General Custer, clad only in boots and hat, "keeping company" with a naked Indian girl. According to the article, "The player earns points by coupling the male figure with the naked Indian Maiden as many times as possible without being hit by an arrow."

It had to happen. Sex and video--too indominatably marketable commodities--had to intersect in the business world eventually. And you can't blame the manufacturers for wanting to make a buck. Hey--that's what America's all about.

But does it have to be so tacky?

Granted, it would be a remarkable piece of technology which could transmit onto a two-dimensional screen the impression that Custer and his friend are enjoying a meaningful and deeply committed relationship.

That's not what I'm talking about, though.

What bothers me, nay, infuriates me about the game is its implicit connotations. The title, "Custer's Revenge," clearly implies that Custer is *raping* the girl.

That's not something to joke about. Or to make a video-game about, as the case may be.

The statistics about rape are truly horrifying. According to information in a column by Ann Landers this summer, one out of every three women is raped in her life. And the number of rapes gets higher every year.

According to figures published by the U.S. Dept. of Justice in 1970, the number of rapes committed was 37,900. In 1979, the number was nearly twice that, at 75,980. One year later, 1980, the rate had increased another eight percent--that's 82,088, for those of you

without calculators handy.

And remember--that's the figures for *reported* rapes. *Woman's Body: An Owner's Manual* estimates that up to 90 percent of all rapes go unreported.

But many people, especially men, seem to view rape as some sort of a joke.

It seems to infinitely fitting that this nasty little idea should show up as a video-game. I've stepped up on my feminist soapbox already; I won't bother you about the ludicrousness of teaching whole generations that blasting aliens is a natural, useful, and prestigious talent. What you do with your quarters is none of my business.

And who knows, maybe I'm wrong. Maybe someday when the Earth is attacked by little green men, Earth will already have a fleet of video-game trained cadets to zap them with phasers. (F.T. go home!)

But if video-games are instructional, what will "Custer's Revenge" teach young people? I haven't even discussed the racist implications of the game...

The marketing company, Mystique Retailing, a division of American Multiple Industries, has marked the game with the words "Not For Sale to Minors." I wonder how effective this "restriction" is supposed to be.

"It's only a game." I can hear many of you thinking. "Why is this woman getting so upset?"

And you have a point too, American Multiple Industries. I am sure, did not mean to offend people with "Custer's Revenge."

As Stuart Kesten, president of the corporation is quoted as saying, "Our object is not to arouse," (and or whatever else, I suppose) "our object is to entertain."

Keep laughing, Stuart.

But I, for one, am not entertained a bit.